

GUIDE TO

SAFE BOATING AND FISHING

IN MICHIGAN



PROVIDED BY:
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DEAR FRIENDS OF THE GREAT LAKES:

With over 11,000 inland lakes, thousands of miles of rivers and streams, and shoreline on four of the five Great Lakes, Michigan is truly a water wonderland! Fun and excitement is never far away whether you love to boat, sail, fish, canoe, kayak, ski or watch nature.

Michigan is the number one boating state in the nation, with over one million registered boats. We also welcome thousands of visitors to our beautiful shores each year. With so many enjoying our waters, it's important to know the rules and practice good seamanship. This newsletter is designed to provide you with an overview of watercraft safety in Michigan. With proper safety information and protocol, we can all have fun while helping prevent accidents.

I am proud to be a resident of Michigan and to have the opportunity to share the wonders of our waterways with family, friends and visitors. It is my hope that everyone will find fun, adventure and safety on our waters. **Anchors aweigh!**



Sincerely,

MICHELLE A. MCMANUS

State Senator
35th District



FISHING IN MICHIGAN



INTRODUCE A CHILD TO FISHING!

Share the fun of fishing during Michigan's Summer Free Fishing Weekend, celebrated on June 12-13 in 2004. On this weekend, all fishing license fees are waived for residents and visitors on both inland and Great Lakes waters. All fishing regulations still apply. For more information and a schedule of activities, visit www.michigan.gov and search by "Free Fishing Weekend."

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

- ▶ You must purchase a license if you are over the age of 17. If you are under 17, you may fish without a license but all fishing regulations still apply.
- ▶ Michigan residents age 65 or older may purchase a senior license.
- ▶ You must have the license and identification in your possession when fishing.
- ▶ Michigan fishing licenses are valid from March 1, 2004 through March 31, 2005.

To purchase a fishing license, you must have a valid Michigan driving license, a valid Michigan ID card and additional proof of residency, or a DNR Sportcard.

LICENSE TYPES

- ▶ A 24-hour license is good for all species for any designated 24-hour period.
- ▶ A Restricted license is good for all species except trout and salmon.
- ▶ An All-species license is good for all species.
- ▶ A special Military discount license is available to eligible servicemen and women upon presentation of leave papers. The \$1 license is available at DNR Operations Service Centers and valid for up to two weeks.

RULES AND REGULATIONS

Access the 2004 Fishing Guide and check the "Weekly Fishing Report" at www.michigan.gov/dnr. (Click on "Fishing").

BOATING IN MICHIGAN



BE INFORMED

This brochure provides a summary of boating safety information only. Detailed information on Michigan boating laws, regulations and responsibilities can be found in the *Michigan Boating Guide*. Access it at www.michigan.gov/dnr or pick up a print copy at many Secretary of State branch offices. Stay current on new laws and regulations. Visit the DNR web site or call the DNR at (517) 373-1230 for up-to-date information.

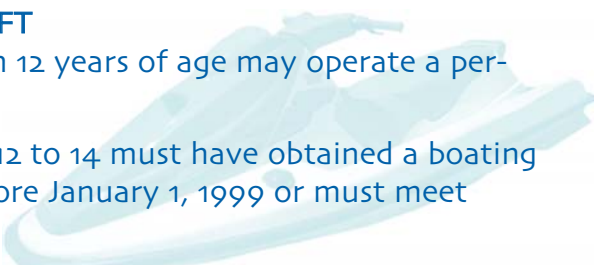
AGE REQUIREMENTS

BOATS

- ▶▶ A person 16 years or older may operate any boat.
- ▶▶ A young person age 12 to 15 may operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than 6 hp without restrictions; or a motor of more than 6 hp if they have passed a DNR-approved boating safety course or are accompanied onboard by a person 16 years or older.
- ▶▶ A young person less than 12 years old may operate a boat powered by a motor of no more than 6 hp without restrictions; or a motor of no more than 6 hp but less than 35 hp if directly supervised onboard by a person 16 years or older. They may not operate a boat powered by a motor of more than 35 hp under any conditions.

PERSONAL WATERCRAFT

- ▶▶ No one younger than 12 years of age may operate a personal watercraft.
- ▶▶ A young person age 12 to 14 must have obtained a boating safety certificate before January 1, 1999 or must meet other requirements.
- ▶▶ A person 14 years or older but born after December 31, 1978, must obtain a boating safety certificate. Those born before December 31, 1978 have no restrictions.



SAFETY EQUIPMENT

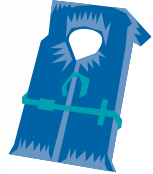
»Type I: Offshore Life Jacket

These vests are geared for rough or remote waters where rescue may take awhile. They are excellent for flotation and will turn most unconscious persons face up in the water.



»Type II: Near-Shore Vest

These vests are good for calm waters and fast rescues. Type II vests may lack the capacity to turn unconscious wearers face up.



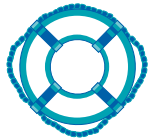
»Type III: Flotation Aid

These vests or full-sleeved jackets are good for calm waters and fast rescues. They are not for rough waters since they will not turn a person face up.



»Type IV: Throwable Device

These cushions or ring buoys are designed to be thrown to someone in trouble. They are not for long hours in rough waters, non-swimmers or the unconscious.



LEARN THE "RULES OF THE ROAD"

All persons operating boats in Michigan are encouraged to take a training course to increase safety and awareness.

Visit www.michigan.gov/dnr to search for a boating safety class in your community. Click on the Quick Link to "Hunter Safety Classes" and select the "Marine" option. Or contact your local County Sheriff Department for information.

WEAR YOUR LIFE JACKET.

ALWAYS!

Most people who drown while boating are not wearing a life jacket.





REQUIRED SAFETY EQUIPMENT

Personal flotation devices (PFDs) or life jackets make a big difference in saving lives. Be sure to follow these important safety laws.

- ▶ All boats must be equipped with a PFD for each person onboard.
- ▶ One Type IV USCG-approved PFD must be onboard boats 16 feet or longer, and readily accessible.
- ▶ All children under 6 years of age must wear a USCG-approved Type I or Type II PFD when riding on a boat's open deck.
- ▶ Anyone riding on or towed behind a personal watercraft must wear a USCG-approved Type I, II or III PFD.
- ▶ Inflatable PFDs are not allowed on personal watercraft.
- ▶ When operating a personal watercraft, a lanyard-type engine cutoff switch must be attached to the person, clothing or PFD.
- ▶ All PFDs must be in good and serviceable condition and must be readily accessible.
- ▶ All boats and personal watercraft must be equipped with a Type B fire extinguisher.

Other equipment requirements vary depending on the size and type of boat or personal watercraft. Check the *Michigan Boating Guide* for specifics.

DON'T DRINK ALCOHOL!

It's illegal to operate a boat or personal watercraft while under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

BOATING HIT-AND-RUN NOW A FELONY

A new law makes the penalty for boating hit-and-run the same as that for causing a hit-and-run accident in an automobile. Under the new law, leaving the scene of a marine accident causing death is now punishable by up to 15 years in prison and up to \$10,000 in fines. For an accident causing serious impairment, the penalty for failure to stop is increased to up to five years in prison and up to \$5,000 in fines.

PRE-DEPARTURE CHECKLIST

- ✓ Leave your float plan with a responsible person. The plan should include details about your type of vessel, number and names of passengers, and the route you will be following.
- ✓ Make sure that the steering and throttle controls and all lights are operating properly.
- ✓ Check for any fuel leaks from the tank, fuel lines and carburetor.
- ✓ Check the engine compartment for oil leaks.
- ✓ Check hose connections for leaks or cracks and make sure hose clamps are tight.
- ✓ Drain all water from the engine compartment and be sure the bilge pump is replaced and secure.
- ✓ Check to be sure the fire extinguisher is fully charged.
- ✓ Make sure the ignition safety switch and wrist lanyard are in working order on a personal watercraft.
- ✓ Make sure you have the required number of personal flotation devices and that they are in good condition.

MAINTAIN A SAFE SPEED AND STAY ALERT!

Most boating accidents are caused by operator errors.

